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52

USIB-D-23.3/1
9 September 1963
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UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: Proposal by Department of State Member of USIB
for Summary and Evaluation of Certain Intelligence
Reporting Regarding Cuba

1. In response to the proposal in the attached State Department message, a working-level group of representatives of State, CIA and DIA met on Saturday, 7 September, to initiate the summary and evaluation, as described therein, of certain intelligence reporting regarding Cuba.
2. The Secretariat has been informed that a report regarding this matter will be drafted by this group in coordination with representatives of other USIB agencies at a meeting on Tuesday, 10 September, for consideration of USIB at its meeting on 11 September. Copies of this draft report will be distributed directly to USIB agencies by the CIA when completed.
3. As indicated in USIB-A-259, the above-cited report has been scheduled on the agenda of the 11 September USIB meeting.



Colonel, USAF
Acting Executive Secretary

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Attachment

Distribution: Attached

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"Please pass to recipients before close of business, 6 September 1963.

"TO : Lt. General Marshall S. Carter,
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Lt. General Joseph F. Carroll,
Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

"FROM : Thomas L. Hughes
The Director of Intelligence and Research,
Department of State

"As you know, we continue to receive raw intelligence reports alleging the presence in Cuba of weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear warheads and BW-CW facilities. I am concerned that we have not had a joint appraisal of the substance of such reports. I am also concerned that the fact of the existence of such reports may come into the public domain. In any case, it is obviously prudent to prepare ourselves against that contingency, to say nothing of the need to examine the question whether in fact there is substance in such reports. To this end I propose that:

"1. USIB order preparation of a memorandum which will:

"a. Summarize the substance of intelligence reports alleging the presence in Cuba of nuclear warheads or other weapons of mass destruction.

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"b. Evaluate the reports for reliability and accuracy.

"c. Render a judgment on the likelihood that such weapons are present in Cuba.

"2. I suggest that as an interim measure we designate intelligence officers to meet as soon as possible to coordinate a State-CIA-DIA position and prepare an interim report before the USIB meeting next Wednesday."

06/1825Z September 1963

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10 September 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE US INTELLIGENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: Evaluation of Reports on the Presence of
Weapons of Mass Destruction in Cuba

1. The full range of intelligence reporting

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verifiable information of the presence in Cuba of nuclear warheads, strategic missiles, military-related radioactive materials, biological weapons, or lethal chemical ~~gases~~ *weapons*.

2. There is no acceptable evidence that the Soviets plan to introduce such weapons into Cuba or that the Soviets or Cubans intend to develop such weapons on the island. On the contrary, the progress made by the Soviets in training the Cuban armed forces, the continuing withdrawal of Soviet military personnel, and the thrust of present Soviet policy vis-a-vis the United States all make it highly unlikely that the Soviets would place weapons of mass destruction at the disposal of Castro and the Cuban Government. Our best evidence indicates that the Soviets have never relinquished control over any such weapons.

3. Nuclear warheads and delivery systems:
There is no reliable evidence of the presence of nuclear warheads in Cuba. Nuclear warhead storage facilities at the strategic missile sites were never completed. However, we continue to receive reports that such warheads are or may be in Cuba, but con-

25X1

weapon systems that remain. Cubans are currently being trained in most of these weapons systems and have already assumed control of some of them.

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4. Certain weapon systems on the island have a dual capability, limited in both range and payload, for delivering either a conventional or a nuclear warhead. They are primarily intended for use as short-range tactical weapons, however, and are not dependent upon nuclear warheads for effective use in this role.

5. We continue to receive reports of the presence of strategic missiles in Cuba capable of delivering a nuclear warhead. Most of these reports can be related to known missile facilities or activities, many are patently false or constitute exaggerated reports of known non-missile activity, while some cannot be reconciled with available information. Attempts to acquire additional information on all reports in the latter category have so far produced no verifiable evidence that strategic missiles either were retained in Cuba or have been reintroduced since their removal.

6. Radioactive materials: One of the three known shipments of radioactive materials ~~shipped~~ to Cuba was associated with oil prospecting. The other two were almost certainly associated with medical treatment or research. There is no evidence that they were in any way connected with nuclear weapons. Shipments of lead have also given rise to rumors of the delivery or presence of nuclear weapons. However, these shipments are known to have been related to Cuban production of storage batteries, shielding for medical facilities, and nickel refining.

8. Biological warfare: Several recent reports have indicated that the Cuban Government is involved in the development and production of biological agents for possible dissemination within the US. Most of these reports have concerned the utilization of Foot and Mouth Disease (Aftosa) for anti-animal BW purposes. Cattle in Cuba apparently are infected with this disease (but not with the far more dangerous rinderpest as reported in the press) and the Cubans are probably attempting to take some preventive measures, possibly involving the development and production of a Foot and Mouth Disease vaccine. Their efforts to this end may lie behind the reports we have received.

9. At the present time, the Cubans do not possess the capability for the research and production necessary to develop a Foot and Mouth Disease weapon system for large scale dissemination. Even if this capability were to be provided by the Soviets, the likelihood of dissemination on this scale would be extremely remote. Cuba does have a capability to introduce clandestinely Foot and Mouth Disease into the United States, or with less difficulty, into *uninfected parts of* Latin America. A successful clandestine attack could not be traced to its origin with certainty and might result in considerable economic harassment in the United States, but could probably be effectively controlled. We believe that the Cuban Government possesses neither an anti-human BW capability nor the technique and resources to develop one.

10. Chemical warfare agents: Several reports have been received concerning the use of chemical agents by Cuban Army forces. These reports usually describe the CW agent as either tear gas or a mixture of gasoline and sulphur. The latter would be an inexpensive and easily obtainable substitute for tear gas. These and possibly other non-lethal CW agents appear to be used to drive anti-Castro elements out of caves and other hiding places. Although not considered lethal, either agent could produce burns and cause the hospitalization of military personnel as described in some of these reports.

11. We believe that Cuba does not now have the capability to develop and produce lethal CW agents. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the Soviets would supply the Cubans with lethal CW munitions. There

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appears to be little opportunity for their safe and effective operational employment in Cuba. In any event, the Cuban armed forces apparently have not received either the protective equipment or the extensive training in handling, storage, and tactical use that such munitions would require.

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